

# codex alimentarius commission



FOOD AND AGRICULTURE  
ORGANIZATION  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS

WORLD  
HEALTH  
ORGANIZATION



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May 2006

**TO:** Codex Contact Points  
Interested International Organizations

**FROM:** Secretary, Codex Alimentarius Commission  
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla, 00100 Italy

**SUBJECT:** **Request for comments and information on: National Food Control System and Consumer Participation in Food Standard Setting and on Use of Codex Standard at National and Regional Level (9<sup>th</sup> Session of the FAO/WHO Coordinating Committee for North America and the South West Pacific)**

**DEADLINE:** 30 August 2006

**COMMENTS:** To: Secretary  
Codex Alimentarius Commission  
FAO/WHO Food Standards Programme  
Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 00100  
Rome, Italy  
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E-mail: [codex@fao.org](mailto:codex@fao.org) (*preferably*)

With a copy to: Ms. Iulia Petelo  
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## BACKGROUND

FAO/WHO Coordinating Committees have regularly considered issues relating to food legislation, food control systems; export/import matters; and relevant training activities, in order to promote exchange of information and cooperation within the Region. The structure and organization of food control systems at the national level is also subject to changes and member countries can compare their experience in this area.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> Session of the Commission considered consumers' involvement in Codex work and asked the Committee on General Principles to review a checklist of measurable objectives to assess consumer participation in Codex work at the national and international levels. The Commission also proposed that Regional Coordinating Committees continue to exchange experiences on the means of developing consumer input into National Codex Committees and Contact Points (ALINORM 99/37, para. 43).

The 57<sup>th</sup> Session of the Executive Committee agreed to combine all issues related to food legislation, food control, national Codex structures and consumer participation, which had been discussed under two different agenda items, into one single item in order to facilitate reporting by member countries and to rationalize discussion in the Coordinating Committees, taking into account possible duplication and confusion in the consideration of these items (ALINORM 06/29/3, para 103).

The 57<sup>th</sup> Session of the Executive Committee agreed to add a new agenda item to regional coordinating committees regarding the use of Codex standards and related texts at the national and regional levels. In pursuit to this decision, it has recommended that members of the Coordinating Committee submit information on the use of Codex standards. The Committee recalled that following the abolition of the acceptance procedure, the Committee on General Principles had recognized the need for cooperation with WTO in order to improve monitoring information on the use of Codex standards at the national level. (ALINORM 06/29/3, para. 105).

## **PART A. INFORMATION ON NATIONAL FOOD CONTROL SYSTEM AND CONSUMER PARTICIPATION IN FOOD STANDARD SETTING**

### ***National Food Control System***

Governments are invited to provide updated information on the status of their national food control system, including information on:

- (i) updated structure and organization of official services responsible for food control;
- (ii) updated legislation and regulations on food safety and quality including import/export matters; and
- (iii) cooperation with other countries on food legislation and food control matters including establishment of equivalence or other trade facilitation agreements (e.g. Memorandum of Understanding) as well as training activities.

### ***National Codex Contact Point and Other National Structure for Codex matters***

Governments are invited to provide information on:

- (i) the activities of the Codex Contact Point, including information, communication and advocacy activities (viz. Core Functions of Codex Contact Points in the Procedural Manual); and
- (ii) establishment and operation of a National Codex Committee (or equivalent or similar structure).

### ***Consumer Participation in Standard Setting***

Governments and international organizations are invited to provide information on consumer participation in standards setting in regard to Points (iii) through (vi) of the “measurable objectives” listed below.

The Checklist of Measurable Objectives is as follows:

- (i) the number or percentage of member countries that have established a National Codex Contact Point;
- (ii) the number or percentage of member countries that have established a National Codex Committee;
- (iii) the number or percentage of member countries which hold public consultations when developing national positions for Codex meetings;
- (iv) the number or percentage of member countries that have identified independent consumer NGOs and invited them to participate in Codex meetings or in submitting written comments;
- (v) the number or percentage of member countries where independent consumer NGOs have participated in developing national positions for Codex meetings;
- (vi) the number of consumer NGOs that participate in the Codex process at the national level.

## **PART B. INFORMATION ON USE OF CODEX STANDARD AT NATIONAL AND REGIONAL LEVEL**

Governments and international organizations are invited to provide information on:

- (i) use of Codex standards and related texts at the national and regional level;
- (ii) non-use of Codex standards and related texts at the national and regional level, with reasons where applicable;
- (iii) difficulties they have experienced in the use or application of Codex standards and related texts at the national and regional level;
- (iv) relevance of Codex standards and related texts as a basis for harmonization of legislations and regulations, including in the perspective of economic integration;
- (v) any other health and/or trade problems related to standardization at the national or regional level.

Governments and international organizations in observer status with Codex wishing to submit information and comments on Part A and B should do so in writing as directed above, *preferably by e-mail*, by **30 August 2006**.